

Bredhurst Church of England Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	118619
Local Authority	Kent
Inspection number	379649
Inspection dates	1–2 December 2011
Reporting inspector	Kath Beck

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Controlled
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	117
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Julie Robson
Acting Headteacher	Mandy Bridges
Date of previous school inspection	27 Jan 2009
School address	The Street Bredhurst Gillingham ME7 3JY
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Age group	4–11
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. Five teachers were observed teaching 12 lessons, including short visits to lessons with the headteacher. Meetings were held with parents, carers, groups of pupils, staff and representatives of the governing body. The inspectors observed the school's work and looked at documentation, including the school's analysis of data about pupils' attainment and progress, procedures for safeguarding pupils and development plans. In addition, pupils' work, attendance records and the results of questionnaires from staff, pupils and from 70 parents and carers were taken into account.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at a number of questions covering these key areas.

- How has the school sustained its high standards over time?
- How effectively is the school enabling the increasing number of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities to make progress?
- To what extent has the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage improved since the last inspection?

Information about the school

This is a small, oversubscribed school that admits pupils from within the immediate locality. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is well below the national average. Most pupils come from a White British heritage. One tenth comes from African, Pakistani, Mixed White and Asian and Other White backgrounds. None speaks English as an additional language. The percentage of pupils identified as having special educational needs and/or disabilities is higher than that usually found. Their needs include behavioural, emotional, social and moderate learning difficulties. All pupils, including children in the Early Years Foundation Stage, are taught in mixed-age groups. There is a breakfast club run by the school. The deputy headteacher is the acting headteacher until a new, permanent headteacher takes up her duties in January 2012.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?

1

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

1

Main findings

Bredhurst Church of England Primary is an outstanding school. Excellent leadership and management ensure that its aim, 'to provide a fun education that gives confidence, independence and success for everyone', is implemented fully. As a result of outstanding teaching, pupils of all abilities and backgrounds make outstanding progress and standards in English and mathematics have remained high over a number of years. Already this academic year, the majority of pupils in Years 5 and 6 are working at a high level for their age.

Staff have very ambitious expectations of what pupils can achieve, and use a wide range of teaching methods to meet their different ways of learning. Pupils' involvement in decisions about the pioneering curriculum has helped to make their learning enjoyable and inspired them to want to do their best. Pupils' exemplary personal development, behaviour and attitudes towards learning contribute significantly to their achievement. The thorough and frequent assessment of pupils' work and teachers' feedback in lessons ensure they know precisely how and what they need to do to improve and that work is matched very closely to their individual needs. Older pupils develop exceptionally good skills and attitudes that will stand them in good stead for the future. These are not only evident in literacy and numeracy, but also in their use of their high level skills to tackle challenging work, their note taking and research, the way they undertake leadership responsibilities, their collaboration and negotiation skills and their grasp of information and communication technology (ICT). An innovative approach to the organisation of the school day enables pupils to enjoy active breaks between lessons, returning refreshed to take on new learning rapidly.

The particular needs of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are analysed and different approaches used to meet them. These include small-group work, one-to-one tuition, and computer programs. Pupils' progress is tracked effectively and teaching methods adapted to ensure they too make brisk progress. In addition, the school works in very close partnership with parents, carers and with other schools and specialists to share expertise that supports their progress very well.

The overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage has improved from good to outstanding since the previous inspection. The needs of young children are exceptionally well met. Teaching is inspirational and the curriculum highly creative, capturing children's interests, motivating them to apply their rapidly developing

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literacy and numeracy skills to meaningful situations. Children play a dynamic role in their education. They show high levels of independence, curiosity, imagination and concentration. The foundations of good learning habits on which children can build as they move through the school are established extremely well.

The school's pursuit of excellence in all its activities over a considerable period of time has maintained high standards and enabled it to build on the outstanding qualities found during the previous inspection. Rigorous self-evaluation means staff regularly assess their impact on pupils' progress. A recent review in mathematics has identified that while pupils have well-developed skills in solving problems, they do not always calculate numbers or complete mental arithmetic challenges as fast as they could. This is confirmed by inspection findings. Such sophisticated analysis carried out on a regular basis and the school's track record indicate it has an outstanding capacity to improve.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve pupils' skills in mental arithmetic by ensuring that all staff use a consistently effective approach.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**1**

Pupils' attainment when they first start school is in line with that usually found. Their high levels of attendance help them to make the best possible progress as they move through the year groups. Pupils, including those from minority ethnic heritages, achieve extremely well and enjoy the many varied, appealing activities available to them. In a typically outstanding literature lesson in a Years 5 and 6 class pupils developed their skills in critical reading, with the most-able exploring issues of author intention, inference and deduction. Pupils worked in groups led by adults with a very clear focus on the learning to be achieved. The activities were based on high-quality literature selected according to pupils' interests and abilities. They read aloud confidently, listened carefully to and learned from the ideas of their classmates. Skilled questioning by adults enabled pupils to think through their ideas, deepen their understanding of the story and acquire important skills for the future.

Pupils learn to write with joined handwriting in Year 1. As they grow older they become skilled at writing neatly, and produce a lot of written work in a short period of time. They write for many different reasons. Their stories, biographies and poems quickly capture and sustain the curiosity of the reader because pupils draw on an extensive and imaginative vocabulary. Initiatives to improve pupils' spelling since the last inspection have proved very successful. Pupils are also confident in dealing with the challenges they face in mathematics, but do not always calculate the steps needed to answer complex problems quickly.

Data indicate that in 2011 boys performed slightly better in mathematics, while girls

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performed slightly better than the boys in English. As a result of the provision made for them, pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities well outperformed their peers nationally. Those who are the most able reach the much higher standards expected of them.

Pupils are very confident about their safety and know how to recognise and deal with unsafe situations. In discussion they said their lessons helped them to understand bullying and what to do if it occurred. Play leaders, peer mediators and school councillors make an important contribution to the school’s happy atmosphere. Behaviour is exemplary. One pupil summed it up when he said, ‘Behaviour is not a problem in our school. We are children and we cannot be good all of the time, we sometimes make mistakes.’ Most pupils adopt healthy lifestyles through the strong promotion of healthy eating. The school’s ‘Flagship’ status for the wide range of sports on offer throughout the day, in clubs after school and interschool football and netball matches, adds much to pupils’ health.

Pupils are very respectful of their own and others’ experiences, raising considerable funds for those less well off than themselves through their enterprise schemes. Themed curriculum weeks and a lively involvement in their local community enable them to know a great deal about the wider world.

These are the grades for pupils’ outcomes

Pupils’ achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	1
Taking into account:	
Pupils’ attainment ¹	1
The quality of pupils’ learning and their progress	1
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	1
The extent to which pupils feel safe	1
Pupils’ behaviour	1
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	1
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	1
Taking into account:	
Pupils’ attendance ¹	1
The extent of pupils’ spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1

How effective is the provision?

Teachers’ excellent subject knowledge and skills in making learning meaningful by

¹ The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low

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linking different subjects enable pupils to build up and apply knowledge and skills quickly. They also make very effective use of ICT to focus learning. Skilled teaching assistants add much to pupils’ progress when working with them individually or in small groups, because they know exactly what pupils are to achieve in each lesson. This was particularly evident in a Years 1 and 2 class where pupils were investigating whether those with the largest hands could hold the most cubes. Pupils took it in turns to measure their hands and count how many cubes they could hold without dropping them. They carefully recorded the data. All adults challenged pupils’ thinking through very effective questioning so that they could hypothesise initially about the likely answer. In their feedback adults asked questions that enabled pupils to consider if they were carrying out the task correctly. As the lesson progressed pupils and adults discussed whether their original hypothesis seemed to be correct as a result of their findings. This high quality lesson promoted many opportunities for young pupils to work collaboratively and apply high-level, problem-solving skills in science and mathematics.

An inspirational curriculum provides pupils with many memorable experiences. A current theme of ‘entertainment’ has provoked much interest in the history of drama and dance. Religious education and themed weeks, such as ‘carnivals across the world’ and ‘Africa week’, contribute a great deal to pupils’ knowledge of different cultures and faiths around the world. Specific lessons and debates about social issues, as well as preparing pupils to deal with differences of opinion or difficulties in relationships, add considerably to their personal development. The curriculum is enriched by well-attended after-school clubs, visitors to the school and visits to places of interest. There are excellent opportunities to learn to play a musical instrument and to take part in a wide range of sports and drama productions. Residential visits for older pupils enable them to learn a great deal about social living away from home and to face new challenges when sailing, kayaking or raft building.

Exceptional care, guidance and support stem from the school’s determination to meet the individual needs of pupils and their families. Pupils attending the breakfast club are cared for very well. The school works closely with a range of professionals, including counsellors, to ensure that support is very well targeted and pupils can make the most of the opportunities provided for them. This is especially true for those pupils whose circumstances may make them vulnerable.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	1
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	1
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils’ needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	1
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	1

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How effective are leadership and management?

All staff have served the school for a long time and have been conspicuously successful in sustaining its success. While they await the arrival of the new headteacher, morale remains high, and there is a strong commitment to meeting the ambitious targets set for all pupils. To enhance their professional development some staff have taken on increased leadership and management responsibilities. Consequently, the school has continued to make changes to its provision through rigorous and insightful self-evaluation and monitoring. For example, staff are working even more closely with parents and carers to improve the reading skills of younger and more reluctant readers. Refinements to the quality of teaching ensure that it remains outstanding throughout the school. The school’s aim to view each child as an individual ensures that equal opportunities are a key part of the school’s work. All groups make exceptional progress.

The governing body is outstanding as it challenges and supports the school in sustaining the high standards achieved. Initiatives to bring about improvements in provision, and changes to the accommodation, are explored fully before being implemented and monitored. The governing body is particularly rigorous in ensuring that staff, pupils and volunteers are properly safeguarded. Arrangements are checked regularly and adjusted so they are fully up to date. Training is provided for parents, carers and pupils so they are fully aware of the dangers and know how to stay safe when using the internet. Risk assessments to minimise hazards are also robust. Community cohesion is promoted exceptionally well within the locality and between local schools. Pupils’ knowledge of other cultures is strong and plans are underway to link to a school in South Africa.

The exceptional partnership with parents, carers, other schools and professionals enables pupils to enjoy experiences that would not otherwise have been possible. Many parents and carers help their children at home, support activities in school, and accompany trips out. Currently, the school is drawing on the experiences of colleagues and other professionals to find the very best way to support pupils with a wide range of special educational needs and/or disabilities.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	1
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	1
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	1
The effectiveness of the school’s engagement with parents and carers	1
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	1

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The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	1
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	1
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	1

Early Years Foundation Stage

Outstanding leadership and management have led to important improvements in provision so that the outdoor environment now adds much to children’s progress in all the areas of learning. Extensive resources outside promote children’s physical development well. A detailed analysis of children’s achievements last year indicates that while they did well in all areas of learning, staff could see room for the further improvement of their skills in communication, language, literacy and calculation. The strong focus on enjoyable ways to develop these skills, and high expectations, are already bringing notable success. Most children are already exceeding the national average in these areas.

From their varied starting points children are achieving extremely well through a highly imaginative and engaging curriculum. The current topic, chosen by the children, is about pixies and fairies who have invaded the classroom, causing problems that the children have to solve each day. Pippin has been captured by the king of the fairies and cannot be released until he receives an illustrated copy of the class rules and some number sentences that have been written and answered correctly. Children eager to release Pippin chose to work independently or with a friend to take photos of, for example a coat on the floor, and write the rule, ‘Hang up your coat’. Others devised and wrote simple addition or subtraction sums to satisfy the request.

On another occasion the pixies spilt paint and spoiled an area of the classroom. To prevent this happening again, children devised posters displayed around the school to ask the pixies to stay away. A letter from Cobweb said she borrowed one of the class computers without asking. This promoted healthy discussion about moral issues.

These highly-motivating activities establish very good work habits and promote language development, confidence and independence. They allow children to increase their knowledge and understanding of the world and stimulate their personal and creative development. In addition, these activities enable them to apply their rapidly developing phonic, reading, writing and ICT skills in a meaningful way.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
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Taking into account: Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	1

Views of parents and carers

Two thirds of parents and carers, a much higher proportion than usual, responded to the questionnaire. Most are very supportive of the school, especially the way it enables their children to enjoy school and keeps them safe. Parents and carers also consider that teaching is good and are pleased with the way that the school keeps them informed about their children’s progress. Written comments often praised the school. They included appreciation of the manner in which families have been supported in times of difficulty and children’s particular needs addressed. A very small number of parents and carers raised concerns about the behaviour of a few pupils, the promotion of healthy lifestyles and leadership and management. These were followed up during the inspection and the school is taking action to try and resolve them. Inspection evidence endorses the positive views expressed by parents and carers.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted’s questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Bredhurst Church of England Primary School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school.

The inspection team received 70 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 117 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	55	79	14	20	1	1	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	61	87	9	13	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child’s progress	50	71	18	26	1	1	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	49	70	19	27	2	3	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	57	81	10	14	1	1	0	0
The school helps me to support my child’s learning	56	80	12	17	0	0	1	1
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	45	64	19	27	1	1	1	1
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	44	63	20	29	3	4	0	0
The school meets my child’s particular needs	39	56	25	36	3	4	1	1
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	46	66	16	23	5	7	2	3
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	34	49	29	41	2	3	2	3
The school is led and managed effectively	43	61	21	30	2	3	1	1
Overall, I am happy with my child’s experience at this school	50	71	17	24	2	3	1	1

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

Overall effectiveness of schools

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	43	47	10	0
Primary schools	6	46	42	6
Secondary schools	14	36	41	9
Sixth forms	15	42	41	3
Special schools	30	48	19	3
Pupil referral units	14	50	31	5
All schools	10	44	39	6

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2010 to 08 April 2011 and are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The sample of schools inspected during 2010/11 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.

Sixth form figures reflect the judgements made for the overall effectiveness of the sixth form in secondary schools, special schools and pupil referral units.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement. ■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils. ■ The quality of teaching. ■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships. ■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.

This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.



5 December 2011

Dear Pupils

**Inspection of Bredhurst Church of England Primary School, Gillingham
ME7 3JY**

Thank you for welcoming us to your school when we visited recently, and for answering all of our questions. In your questionnaires you said that you really enjoy school, learn a lot in lessons and that the headteacher and staff do a good job. Most of you said the school helps you to be healthy, as the school encourages you to eat appropriately and take part in lots of sports. When talking about behaviour in school, one of you said, 'We are children and we cannot be good all of the time, we do make mistakes,' and that is realistic. We judged your behaviour, especially in lessons, to be outstanding and your calm manner means you can learn a lot.

You go to an outstanding school. Teaching is of high quality in all year groups. You all make excellent progress in reading, writing and mathematics. Your joined handwriting is helping you to write a great deal very quickly. You take a lot of pride in presenting your work well. Everyone in school listens carefully to the suggestions you make about the best ways you like to learn and what you want to learn about. This makes you enthusiastic to attend very regularly. Your work and progress are checked frequently. All the adults who work with you give you a very clear idea about what you need to do to improve the next piece of work and how to do it.

The youngest of you make a very good start to school. You are clearly enjoying your current project where the pixies and fairies have invaded your classroom.

Even outstanding schools can improve. We have asked the headteacher, governors and staff to help you to become even better at mental arithmetic so you can calculate and use your mental arithmetic skills quickly when working on complex problems. We know that you will all contribute by continuing to do your very best.

Yours sincerely

Kath Beck
Lead inspector

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